



Trans-Lake Washington Project

Summary of November 2000 Community Design Workshops – Identification of Community Values

Prepared for

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Office of Urban Mobility**

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1. OVERVIEW OF REPORT

This report provides an overview of the community design process (Section 2), summarizes the key issues raised by the community during the first series of workshops in November 2000 (Section 3), provides a categorized summary of the input received (Sections 4-7), and lists who participated in the first series of workshops (Section 8).

2. OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY DESIGN PROCESS

The Trans-Lake Washington Project is evaluating potential alternatives for improving mobility in the SR 520 corridor. A key objective of the project is to ensure that mobility improvements will be designed to make SR 520 a better neighbor with the community, and a better fit with the environment. In order to meet this objective, the community design process is a key part of the project, which includes providing input to how potential alternatives are designed and evaluated. The objective of the community design process is to understand the answers to the following questions:

- What are the most important community objectives to factor into the design process?
- What is the community vision of a successful project?
- What ideas will address the community's principles and values?
- What are promising ways to mitigate noise, traffic, and other transportation impacts?

The input received from participants in the process will be incorporated, to the extent possible, during the design and evaluation by the project's technical team and provided to the project's committees (Executive, Technical, and Advisory) to consider as part of their decision-making process.

Community design workshops are being held in four locations along the corridor:

- Portage Bay/Eastlake/Roanoke/North Capitol Hill neighborhoods
- Montlake and Laurelhurst neighborhoods
- West of I-405 to the eastern shore of Lake Washington
- East of I-405 to the terminus of SR 520

At each location a series of three workshops are being held. The purpose of the first community design workshop, held in November 2000 and summarized in this report, is to identify specific community values and characteristics. The second workshop, to be held in February 2001, will include presentation of potential alternatives and design options for review by the participants.



A third workshop will be held in late Spring 2001 and will present potential multi-modal alternatives and design options, again for review and input by the participants.

In order to ensure the input received during the community design workshops is reflective of the community at large, workshop invitees have been selected to ensure broad community representation. This included residents, business, school and church representatives, park and public facilities representatives, etc. The project team worked with local jurisdictions along the corridor as well as existing community groups to identify individuals and interests to participate in the process. Participants were asked to commit to participate in the all three workshops. An emphasis was placed on those who lived or worked immediately adjacent to the corridor; however, others were invited from major facilities, business, or neighborhoods that either had an impact on or were impacted by the SR 520 facility. A list of workshop attendees to date is included in Section 8.

Open houses were held in the evening following each workshop to invite more general participation by the broader public in the community design process. At the evening sessions, the same questions and materials were presented to the public as were presented to the workshop participants. Invitations to the evening sessions were sent to the project's mailing list as well as posters placed at locations throughout the communities.

3. SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY VALUES

The project received a great deal of valuable input during the November events. This section highlights some of the key issues raised by participants during the four community design workshops and open houses. It is not intended to reflect every comment received or consensus reached by the participants, but provides highlights of the general discussion and themes that were raised. Section 4 provides a categorized summary of the input received.

3.1 MONTLAKE COMMUNITY

- The ability to walk and ride bicycles around the neighborhood to parks, community facilities, and commercial areas is important. Safety should be addressed as well as walkways and trails enhanced.
- Open space is a part of the Montlake community and the area where SR 520 is today was part of the original Olmsted Park Plan. Suggestions were made to enhance the amount of open space in the neighborhood and preserve access to those areas.
- SR 520 divided the community into two neighborhoods on the north and south sides. It is important to reconnect the community.
- The impact of SR 520 today – noise, air, and water pollution – is intolerable and should be reduced. The project was encouraged to look beyond 'normal' mitigation measures.
- Transit is seen as a key component of the neighborhood and continued access should be balanced with the impacts of bringing regional users into the community. Transportation



demand management is also an important component of the entire transportation system and should be a major focus of the project.

- Cut-through traffic trying to reach SR 520 has an enormous impact on the community. Suggestions were made to reduce the number of access points to SR 520 from the neighborhood.

3.2 PORTAGE BAY, ROANOKE, EASTLAKE, AND NORTH CAPITOL HILL COMMUNITIES

- Noise was identified as the most detrimental impact of SR 520 and is something that should be addressed today. It is the desire of the community to be able to talk with their neighbors without screaming to each other.
- Other forms of pollution – air, stormwater runoff – should also be addressed by the project. This includes mitigating the impacts of today and tomorrow. Solutions should not worsen today's impacts.
- Community connectivity is important to the residents and some see as the ultimate goal. Reconnection of the Portage Bay, Roanoke, North Capitol Hill, and Eastlake communities as they were before SR 520 and I-5 were built.
- The feeling of the neighborhood today should be preserved, including parking on streets and the residential feel of the neighborhood.
- Pedestrian access across the busy local streets is important and the safety of those crossings should be improved.
- Cut-through traffic has a detrimental impact on the feeling and characteristics of the community and numerous suggestions were made for re-routing or changing access to SR 520 and I-5 from the neighborhoods.
- Transit is an important element of mobility, but concerns were raised about impacts on the community characteristics if a regional transit center were to be built in the neighborhood.
- An increased focus on transportation demand management is seen as an important part of the solution.

3.3 WEST OF I-405 TO LAKE WASHINGTON COMMUNITIES

- The community should be a quiet community, with no cut-through traffic, enhanced habitat, additional park and recreation facilities, visual aesthetics, access to transit, and improved air and water quality. Mitigating the impacts of today (noise, air, water pollution) is extremely important as well as impacts from construction.
- Pedestrian access and bicycle trails are very important to the community and existing facilities (i.e., the Loop Trail) should be enhanced.



- Environmental protection is a key focus of the community and the nature preserves in the area are a source of pride and hard work to maintain and enhance the existing natural areas. The project should support this focus and enhance where possible.
- Reconnecting the communities is extremely important. The freeway has divided most of the communities in this section of the corridor.
- Cut-through traffic is a major concern to these communities, particularly the communities in the Points area. Ways to reduce this impact from SR 520 should be explored.
- Access to transit, which is valued by many members of the community today and in the future, should be balanced with the possibility of drawing more regional users into the community.

3.4 EAST OF I-405 TO SR 520 TERMINUS COMMUNITIES

- A successful solution will result in less noise, increased mobility, a bicycle/pedestrian route, a long-term solution, protection of neighborhoods, and more pleasant visual aesthetics.
- The impact of drivers exiting the freeway onto neighborhood streets and continuing to drive as if they are on the freeways was identified as a significant concern. A ‘quiet street’ concept was suggested to bring the neighborhood feel onto the interchange so drivers understand they are in a residential area. It was also suggested that existing interchanges could be re-designed to emphasize the neighborhood characteristics rather than the freeway characteristics.
- Access to SR 520 is extremely important to the community and suggestions were made for new access points while balancing the impact on neighborhoods if cut-through traffic increases along with the access.
- Cut-through traffic is a significant concern to the community and examples were given of not being able to access the road from driveways due to congestion. Ways to reduce this should be explored.
- Transit is an important part of the transportation system and access, convenience, and reliability should be improved.
- The environment is an important part of the community and should be preserved and enhanced by the project, not further impacted.

4. MONTLAKE COMMUNITY VALUES

The Montlake community is generally described as the residences and business districts to the north and south of SR 520, stretching from the Montlake Bridge at the north end to 24th and Boyer at the south end, from the Arboretum and Husky Stadium to the east and to Portage Bay on the west.



4.1 MONTLAKE WORKSHOP – NOVEMBER 15, 2000

Community Enhancements

- Some participants spoke in favor of a ‘town center’ for the Montlake neighborhood, supporting and expanding the existing commercial district on 24th Avenue (similar to the business district on 15th Avenue East or Madison Park). Others felt that the residential nature of the neighborhood should be preserved. The commercial center at the interchange of SR 520 and Montlake Boulevard (Hop In Grocery, Texaco) is not very accessible to residents due to its location at a busy intersection.
- The ability to walk through the neighborhood and to points of interest (i.e., Arboretum, Museum of History and Industry, Foster Island, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) building, schools, parks, and libraries) is important to residents. Today, the traffic using Montlake Boulevard to access SR 520 creates an environment where walking is neither safe nor pleasant. It is important to the community to improve this situation.
- Today, SR 520 separates the community, with part of the Montlake neighborhood residences on the north side of the freeway and others on the south. This divide needs to be bridged.
- Connectivity is important to the neighborhood, including connecting parks and open spaces with other areas so that residents can walk, take transit, or ride bicycles.
- Community issues that should be addressed to make the Montlake neighborhood a place where everyone can enjoy the community, include removing physical barriers, improving congestion on local streets (due to lack of access heading east for Portage Bay/Roanoke neighborhood, queuing, and metering on on-ramps), and reducing noise, air, and water pollution.
- Any lid that is placed on the SR 520 corridor should be integrated with the neighborhood, not built as another barrier for residents. This could be accomplished by covering the area from the Arboretum to Portage Bay.
- Community facilities should be accessible to the community, such as placing the Museum of History and Industry next to a park rather than next to a freeway as it is today.
- Open and green spaces are extremely important to the community. The area where SR 520 currently sits was part of the Olmsted Park system, as envisioned by the Olmsted Brothers. It is important to the community that this vision is realized and the amount of open space in the Montlake neighborhood increased. An “English Commons” concept was mentioned as were open spaces ringed with trees (wide-open spaces seen as intimidating to potential users). Concern was expressed that housing or other structures on top of a lid might run counter to the interest of increasing the amount of open space.
- It is important to preserve the views to the east and west that exist today.

Community Impacts

- Congestion on Montlake Boulevard is seen mainly as a result of the interchange at SR 520. Lines of traffic queue onto the roadway waiting to enter SR 520. Drivers often cut through



the Montlake neighborhood to bypass the congestion on SR 520 and enter the freeway at the last on-ramp at the Arboretum.

- Whether or not to close the interchanges at Montlake and Lake Washington Boulevards has both positive and negative impacts on the community. Some participants suggested closing access to SR 520 through the Montlake neighborhood or making on and off ramps transit-only. In this case, access to SR 520 would be only from I-5. Other participants valued access to the east side of the Lake or worried whether the traffic would simply move into another neighborhood.
- For traffic coming across SR 520 from the east side to access for the University of Washington, suggestions were made regarding an alternate route that would branch from the current corridor to north of Montlake Bridge. Conceptually, this would redirect traffic from Montlake Boulevard directly to Pacific Street.
- Noise, air, and water pollution from the facility today are of significant concern to residents in the Montlake neighborhood as well as the Laurelhurst neighborhood. The Laurelhurst neighborhood can constantly hear noise from the facility. This situation should be improved.

Community Facilities

- It is important to have community facilities, such as the library, next to transit to increase access.
- The NOAA facility has historically significant buildings and has worked with the community to beautify the area surrounding the complex. If a double-decked facility were put in the SR 520 corridor, it would have a detrimental impact on the parking lot used by NOAA under the freeway. Relocating the parking spaces within the community would detrimentally impact the neighborhood. There is interest in maintaining connectivity with the facility and the community and other open spaces. Some concern was raised about the fence around the property hindering public access.
- The Museum of History and Industry and its adjacent parking lot are well used by the community. This includes parking before walking over Foster Island and through the Arboretum as well as visiting the Museum. It would be more advantageous to the community to reuse the structure once the museum relocates to downtown in 2006 rather than leave the structure empty or building new structures.
- The University of Washington has recently released its master plan for 2002 through 2012, which projects an increase in enrollment of 15,000 students. This increase in students will be matched with an increase in the use of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian walkways to enable people to reach the campus through means other than cars. The University would also like to support faculty and students living close to campus so they do not have to commute to the campus.

Transit

- Some residents see the availability of transit in the Montlake neighborhood as an enhancement to the livability of the community. This increases access for the residents as



well as the value of homes. The ability to take a bus to the University District, downtown, or the east side is invaluable to some residents.

- One feature of the transit stops at the Montlake Boulevard and SR 520 interchange is that they are on two different grade levels and access from one to the other can be unsafe and confusing. If a transit station is built along with a lid, all stops should be at the same grade to facilitate transfers and increase ease of use.
- Some residents believe it would be beneficial to have access to high capacity transit in the Montlake neighborhood. This will decrease the number of single occupancy vehicles using the local streets. Concern was expressed about attracting more people and development in the Montlake neighborhood if the Montlake Boulevard and SR 520 interchange is a major transit hub. A transit station at Montlake would only be useful if it is useful within the entire regional system.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

- It is important to the community to increase the pedestrian atmosphere. Right now safety, and noise and air pollution, are deterrents to people walking around the neighborhood. Current plans to increase pedestrian access are part of the Arboretum Master Plan, which is proposing to use the “ramps to nowhere” for pedestrian and bicycle users. Other ways that the pedestrian atmosphere of the neighborhood could be increased are through a trail alongside the NOAA building continuing north, safer crossing across the Montlake Bridge, a bicycle/pedestrian trail across the Lake, or a trail under SR 520 by the Arboretum.
- If a bicycle/pedestrian facility is added to SR 520, one suggestion was made to add a spur connecting it directly to the Madison Park neighborhood to increase accessibility to SR 520 for bicyclists and walkers.
- Right now, many bicyclists use neighborhood streets rather than designated paths. An improvement would be to provide a better path for bicyclists that was more clearly marked and provided direct access to the places they wish to go.
- If a lid is built over SR 520, bicycle lanes should cross over and provide access to the Montlake neighborhood south of the corridor.

Transportation Demand Management

- The Trans-Lake Washington Project should look developing incentives to encourage drivers to get out of their cars and use public transit or bicycles.

Questions

- Would the no-action alternative in the SR 520 corridor still require WSDOT to implement mitigation measures in the corridor?
- Have all the funds for construction of I-90 been spent?



4.2 MONTLAKE COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE – NOVEMBER 15, 2000

Community Enhancements

- Today, SR 520 is a physical barrier between Portage Bay and Montlake, including at the I-5 and SR 520 interchange. This divide should be bridged.
- The Montlake neighborhood should be safe to walk and live in. One suggestion for accomplishing this is a pedestrian-scale bridge with shops located on a lid. The Montlake neighborhood can help be a solution to sprawl by being walkable, accessible to transit, and other design features that allow people to not use their cars.
- The I-90 facility on Mercer Island is not necessarily an ideal situation and is probably not workable in the Montlake community. There is concern that there is not a solution that will not have a detrimental impact on the neighborhood.
- Some suggested removing access to SR 520 at the Arboretum while others expressed concern about the impact of diverted traffic on other neighborhoods. The existing traffic pattern in the neighborhood should be improved to decrease impacts on the community, such as the U-turn at Hamlin Street to access SR 520 eastbound, limiting access to transit only, and metering traffic on off-ramps.
- Preservation of homes is important to the community. A solution that takes homes will not be acceptable.
- Views from Madison Park should not be further diminished.
- Community facilities are important and should be maintained or enhanced, such as placing a public library on top of a lid, restoring the south entrance of the Museum of History and Industry, or building a new library with access from Montlake Boulevard.

Community Impacts

- A significant concern to the neighborhood is the increased traffic through the Montlake neighborhood if SR 520 is expanded to accommodate additional capacity. Look for a way to decrease the amount of traffic on Montlake Avenue.
- A tunnel under the water would be the best solution to mitigate noise impacts on the community, not noise walls. Some suggested that noise walls in the Montlake neighborhood would have a disastrous impact on the community.
- Today, pollution from SR 520 is a major problem for the community. Noise, dust, and stormwater runoff are all impacts experienced by the neighborhood and need to be addressed. Building a bigger facility will not solve these problems; impacts should not be increased.
- The Endangered Species Act will require significant facilities for stormwater treatment and need to be considered by the project early in the process.
- There is concern that a long construction project would have a detrimental impact on the neighborhood.
- The Trans-Lake Washington project should look at options beyond the “normal” mitigation measures for noise, air, and water pollution.



- There is concern about having a lid across SR 520 in the Montlake neighborhood. With a lid, it is not possible to cover the on and off-ramps, and thus there would be a need for noise walls in those locations. Noise walls would not be an option that is desirable to the community, as residents would be looking at large concrete walls. Realistically, a lid for a facility with increased capacity (6 to 8 lanes) would not be an acceptable trade-off for the neighborhood.
- It is not acceptable for the SR 520 corridor to continue to take the impacts of the region's transportation needs.
- It is critical that reparations for lost recreation areas be made, such as reducing impact of the existing facility and restoring recreation areas.

Transit

- The Trans-Lake Washington Project should look at putting monorail in a loop around SR 520, I-5, I-90, and I-405. This solution would limit the amount of right of way required and increase access to the University of Washington from the eastside.
- The Montlake neighborhood should not be a transit center. Rather, transit should take users directly to where they want to go, such as the University of Washington.
- The bus system will need to be improved to encourage people to use transit rather than drive their cars.

Transportation Demand Management

- There is a need to encourage drivers to not drive their cars, but use transit. More emphasis needs to be placed on transportation demand management by the Trans-Lake Washington Project and the City of Seattle. The only solution is to get people out of their cars and onto buses.

Proposed Alternatives

- Right now, Montlake is a walkable community with access to transit and close proximity to open space. The Trans-Lake Washington Project will encourage sprawl rather than communities similar to Montlake.
- The Trans-Lake Washington Project should look at the benefits of making the outside lanes of SR 520 HOV only during peak times.
- It is necessary to look at SR 520 and I-90 together as a complete transportation system rather than studying each of them separately.

Questions

- How would traffic be distributed onto local streets in any of the proposed solutions?
- Where will additional traffic go when SR 520 reaches I-5 or I-405?
- Metering of on-ramps at Montlake Boulevard is not working and is increasing the amount of traffic on local streets. Could there be an experiment of removing ramp meters to determine if there is less of an impact on the community?



- Why is there not more of a focus on improving I-90 rather than focusing solely on SR 520?
- Is seismic retrofitting of the Portage Bay viaduct being delayed because of the Trans-Lake Washington Project?
- Has there been research into electronically controlled (i.e., GPS) vehicle movement? How far into the future is this project looking – 20 to 30 years?
- How were the stated potential widths for an expanded SR 520 developed? It appears that they did not include walls, edges, or shoulders.
- Has there been a policy change in the number of passengers allowed in HOV lanes or how the SR 520 corridor is used?
- Who is paying for studies of SR 520 and other freeways?
- Have all the funds for construction of I-90 been spent?
- How long did construction on Mercer Island last?

5. PORTAGE BAY, ROANOKE, EASTLAKE, AND NORTH CAPITOL HILL COMMUNITY VALUES

The Portage Bay/Roanoke neighborhood is generally described as Portage Bay to the east, Lake Union to the north, I-5 to the west, and SR 520 to the south. The Eastlake neighborhood is generally described as the area from I-5 to the east, Roanoke Street to the north, Lake Union to the west, and Fairview Avenue to the south. The north Capitol Hill neighborhood is generally described as 15th Avenue to the east, SR 520 to the north, I-5 to the west, and Boston Street to the south.

5.1 PORTAGE BAY/ ROANOKE/ EASTLAKE/ NORTH CAPITOL HILL WORKSHOP – NOVEMBER 16, 2000

Community Enhancements

- Residents would like to be able to talk to their neighbors without having to scream over the noise from SR 520. Noise should be reduced in the community, not just in homes.
- Residents would like to be able to open their windows without dust in the air.
- The community would like to see people they know in cars as they drive by. This means reducing cut-through traffic and neighborhood speeds.
- It is important to the community to be able to enjoy the natural areas in the neighborhood and live in a quiet, park-like neighborhood. Today, it is often too noisy to enjoy the open spaces and parks. It is important that existing open spaces, sidewalks, and businesses be preserved; they should not be given up for increased capacity.



- The community would like additional open space and be able to utilize existing open space, such as under the Portage Bay viaduct. Currently, the waterfront under the viaduct is inaccessible and the land is not landscaped or usable.
- The neighborhoods would like to be reconnected as they were before SR 520 and I-5 were built, including Eastlake, Portage Bay, Roanoke, and north Capitol Hill. The center of the neighborhood used to be the SR 520 and I-5 interchange. Today, it is difficult for north Capitol Hill residents to enjoy Roanoke Park even though it is only a few blocks away.
- Community areas that are important to the residents include Seward School, Roanoke Park, and St. Patrick's Church. Adding additional lanes to SR 520 might take community facilities, such as the Seattle Yacht Club.
- It is important that the feel of the neighborhood be maintained, including preserving parking on streets for residents, and maintaining the residential feel of the neighborhood (single-family zoning). Do not create commercial development between neighborhoods that will separate the neighborhoods further.
- The Eastlake neighborhood today has approximately 3,500 residents and 3,500 employees.
- The community would like increased pedestrian access and to be able to safely cross all of the streets in the neighborhood, including Boylston and Roanoke. Today, noise from I-5 makes it difficult for pedestrians to hear oncoming traffic on local streets. One suggestion was made to build a pedestrian bridge at every cross street and insulate it from the freeway noise.

Community Impacts

- Solutions cannot worsen the existing impacts on neighborhoods.
- No more cars can be added to local streets. Mitigation is unlikely to work in reducing noise itself. Traffic on local streets causes safety problems for pedestrians and increases noise and air pollution. Improvements suggested include a landscaped island at Boylston Street to provide a buffer for Seward School, providing a free right turn at 10th Avenue, providing a cloverleaf at 10th and Roanoke to access I-5 northbound rather than accessing it from Harvard, creating opportunities for freeway access at other locations (i.e., Lakeview), and slowing arterial traffic using lights and street parking.
- Residents must be able to park on the streets as the steepness of the neighborhood prevents many from having garages.
- Dust, noise, air, and toxic pollution are all of concern to the community. The existing facility exceeds Clean Water Act standards and EPA standards for noise. A lid is not the only answer to solving these problems; pollutants will still need to be treated.
- A decibel level of 50 is preferable. The community requires a written commitment that the project will not exceed EPA standards with whatever alternative is ultimately chosen.
- The community is interested in mitigation of today's impacts of SR 520 before discussing what mitigation is required for future improvements to the freeway.
- The Eastlake neighborhood plan has elements that address how to decrease pollution.



- Where SR 520 rises in Portage Bay, how can a lid be used to mitigate noise, which is a higher priority than visual impacts?
- A lid may not be an attractive mitigation option because it would rise too high above the homes and create a wall in the community. The existing retaining walls are not attractive. An additional challenge of a lid is the need to build ventilation shafts.
- Some community members feel that a design that includes a double-decked facility would lead to more pollution.
- A lid with open space or playfields for use by Seward School would be an attractive community feature. A lid from Portage Bay to the I-5 interchange, covering I-5, would be an attractive option to the community. A land bridge to connect Portage Bay, Roanoke, north Capitol Hill, and Eastlake with additional open space would also be an attractive community feature.
- A lid could become an economical form of mitigation if cost includes development opportunities on the new space. Look at the real costs of freeway, such as impact on property value, loss of property and land use.
- Commercial buildings on 'bridge' could act as noise barriers. Pedestrian bridges will not be enough to mitigate noise pollution so residents can walk in the neighborhood.
- The project should look at placing existing ramps in tunnels to reduce impacts.
- Look for ways to integrate mitigation tools with art. Aesthetics could also be addressed based on the type of mitigation used.

Transit

- Access to transit should be provided for the community, including HOV lanes, light rail stations, etc. Providing access will increase mobility for people.
- The Eastlake neighborhood plan is not in favor of high capacity transit because of the limited space in the neighborhood.
- Local employers are interested in providing transit for their employees.

Transportation Demand Management

- The Trans-Lake Washington Project should look at ways to encourage people to use buses and trains, not just their cars.
- Traffic flow within Seattle should work well to encourage people to live in the city so they do not have to use their cars.

Proposed Alternatives

- The option of high capacity transit, which requires a narrower right-of-way, is more attractive as it cannot be turned into a general purpose lane in the future.
- There is concern that maximum width of the alternatives as currently described will overwhelm the neighborhood.



- The no-action alternative could include changes to make the existing system function better, such as making the existing lanes reversible or converting general purpose lanes to HOV lanes at certain times of the day.
- One way to decrease the impact on neighborhoods would be to design SR 520 from Foster Island to I-5 as a 40-mile-per-hour arterial. This would slow traffic and minimize the footprint of the facility.
- The neighborhoods do not want to see more traffic coming through the SR 520 corridor. Solutions that increase throughput of people while reducing the impact on neighborhoods may be more acceptable to the community.
- If HOV lanes are built, the Trans-Lake Washington Project should assess the possibility of turning them into general purpose lanes in the future, what potential penalties could be associated with such conversion, and what mechanisms could be in place to prevent conversion.
- Consider modifying the on-ramp from SR 520 to I-5 southbound by having it lead into a tunnel under I-5 rather than as a fly-over ramp as constructed today. If more fly-over ramps are proposed, the community will need to see drawings of what they would look like in the neighborhood.
- The project should be realistic about what funding is available.

Questions

- Is there balance of representation of the east and west sides of the lake on the Executive Committee?
- Will the Sound Transit vent shaft in the north Capitol Hill neighborhood have an impact on solutions in the SR 520 corridor; would a lid be precluded? Will changes made to the SR 520 corridor impact the agreements about mitigation made between Sound Transit and the community? Have these two projects been coordinated?
- What options will be available for funding improvements in the SR 520 corridor?
- Will sound mitigation along I-5 to the Ship Canal Bridge be part of the Trans-Lake Washington Project, especially if more general purpose traffic from SR 520 is accessing I-5 northbound?

Action Items

- The Executive Committee should take a tour of the neighborhoods to see existing impacts of SR 520.
- Provide the community a letter clarifying 1) that the project will not exceed EPA standards with whatever alternative is ultimately chosen; 2) how mitigation is handled if the no-action alternative is selected; and 3) the project's commitment to mitigation.
- Obtain noise studies that have been completed, which documented and evaluated mitigation measures for noise vibrations north on I-5 to the Ship Canal Bridge.



- Obtain letter from Sound Transit that states vent shaft in the north Capitol Hill neighborhood would not preclude a lid on the SR 520 facility.
- Obtain letter from King County Executive Ron Sims regarding mitigation in the Portage Bay and Roanoke neighborhoods.
- Obtain copy of WSDOT report on stormwater treatment alternatives.
- Look at examples in Pennsylvania for use of honeycomb material in noise walls.
- Bring examples of translucent noise barriers to next community design workshop.

5.2 PORTAGE BAY/ ROANOKE/ EASTLAKE/ NORTH CAPITOL HILL COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE – NOVEMBER 16, 2000

Community Enhancements

- While lids are costly, breaking up the community is more costly. Lids should be built no matter how high the cost. The cost/benefit of building lids and then leasing the space on top should be analyzed.
- Using a lid to cover the freeway will better the environment for the Montlake and Portage Bay communities. A lid from the Museum of History and Industry to Portage Bay would serve to connect the neighborhoods. A lid in the Arboretum area would restore the park area. A lid over the I-5 and SR 520 interchange would also reconnect those neighborhoods.
- The Portage Bay/Roanoke area is the noisiest stretch of freeway. It has not been mitigated in 40 years and it is difficult for the community to believe that lids are the solution today. Are they too expensive? There needs to be a clear demonstration that the Washington Department of Transportation is ready to listen to the community.
- Even if the through lanes are lidded, ramps will not be and still divide the community. Will lids improve livability and the transportation system?
- If a lid is built, several suggestions were made for use of the land on top of the lid, including public housing and quiet park-like areas where people can walk. Consider space under the freeways for homes or other uses (i.e., Portage Bay).
- Do not build a cut-and-cover tunnel, but a ‘proper’ tunnel.
- The tunnel on Mercer Island is an attractive option.

Community Impacts

- Mitigation should be provided for current and future conditions, on-off ramps in the Arboretum area, and noise pollution.
- Traffic accessing the freeway has a detrimental impact on the neighborhoods. The ramps in the Arboretum and the off-ramp at Montlake should be eliminated to alleviate this problem. Another solution might be to widen the Montlake Bridge.



- The University of Washington is considering increasing its enrollment by 15,000 students. This will further add to the congestion on the Montlake Bridge.
- If capacity is added to the I-5 express lanes, noise impacts on the neighborhoods will increase. The existing reflected noise from the I-5 express lanes is 82 decibels.
- Mitigating noise pollution on the Portage Bay viaduct is of more importance than maintaining the view. Ways to mitigate noise include quieter pavement, lid, or sound attenuation.
- Studies looking at noise pollution in the Portage Bay/Roanoke area should be funded.

Transit

- Rubber tires should be used on buses and high capacity transit to mitigate noise.
- High capacity transit should be placed under the Montlake Cut directly to the University of Washington to improve access (i.e., to light rail station at Pacific Street).
- The I-5 and SR 520 interchange is a good location for a transit center, especially if commercial facilities are located nearby (grocery stores, dry cleaners, etc.) for riders to use.
- The right-of-way for rail should be preserved today, not when a solution is finally agreed upon.
- The Trans-Lake Washington Project should look at way to improve bus service across the lake. Transfer points and frequency of buses should be improved to encourage use to the east side.
- Some community members are interested in having Park and Ride lots located in the city (i.e., Museum of History and Industry) to increase use of transit. Others feel that Park and Ride lots are more appropriate on the east side of the lake. A suggestion was made to mitigate the impacts of Park and Ride lots by lidding them.

Transportation Demand Management

- Tolls should be placed on SR 520 to manage demand.
- The Trans-Lake Washington Project should focus more on transportation demand management.

Proposed Alternatives

- All alternatives currently being considered are very car focused. The community does not want to see more cars. Alternative forms of transportation, such as monorail, should be considered. Can alternatives that look at not adding capacity be considered?
- The land use and transportation system need to work better together. This means including rail and ferries as part of the transportation planning process.
- No new right of way should be taken for the transportation system. Can the project promise the community that it will build within the existing right of way? What land would be taken to achieve the proposed alternatives?



- Will the transportation system work better if the proposed alternatives are implemented? Who will it serve?

Questions

- What percentage of congestion is attributed to incidents and/or accidents on SR 520? What is more important to improving SR 520 – shoulders or general purpose lanes?
- What coordination will occur between the Trans-Lake Washington Project and the monorail study recently approved by Seattle voters?
- Is a lid buildable in the Montlake area?

6. WEST OF I-405 TO LAKE WASHINGTON COMMUNITY VALUES

The community west of I-405 to Lake Washington is generally described as the residences and business districts in the Towns of Hunts and Yarrow Points, and the cities of Medina, Clyde Hill, Kirkland, and portions of Bellevue.

6.1 WEST OF I-405 WORKSHOP – NOVEMBER 29, 2000

Community Enhancements

- An enhanced community would include a quiet community with no cut-through traffic, enhanced habitat, additional parks and recreation facilities, visual aesthetics, access to transit, and improved air and water quality. It is important that the feeling of community be promoted. The transportation problems need to be solved while improving the quality of life for the surrounding communities. The project should address the impacts right the first time.
- Access to resources is an important part of the community's quality of life. This includes access to SR 520 without drawing regional users through the Points communities and having that access define the community.
- The community would like to be able to walk on the roads and trails in the Points communities without being conscious of SR 520. In addition, walking on Lake Washington Boulevard and 108th without safety concerns is important to the residents of Bellevue and Kirkland.
- Environmental protection is extremely important to the communities west of I-405 and significant effort is being put into restoring habitat. This includes habitat for bald eagles and salmon. Any project should look for ways to not only protect existing habitat but also potentially reduce the environmental impact of the freeway (for example, restoring fish runs and connecting wildlife/water corridors).
- A successful project would fix the impacts of today's facilities while reconnecting the communities by reducing or minimizing the footprint with a lid. Also, at the water's edge, bringing an enclosed bridge into either an enclosed roadway or tunnel under Evergreen Point Road would also address the noise impacts of today. "Making the freeway disappear" was the ultimate goal of many of the community members.



- A lid is essential to addressing the impacts of today (noise, air, runoff) and suggestions were made to build it from Lake Washington to Bellevue Way. This would appear as a subgrade roadway with a flush cover over the entire area. Activities that could take place on top of a lid may include play fields, dog parks, community events, housing, commercial areas, or transit. Noise walls do not really solve the problems faced by the communities and may make it worse for some areas as the noise will reflect into other neighborhoods.
- How a lid across the freeway would transition into the community should be illustrated. There are opportunities to use the facilities on the lid (i.e., parks, walkways) to extend into the community to enhance connectivity (example given at 92nd to create entrance to residential/rural/suburban area with pedestrian walkways).
- There is property between 96th and 92nd that is owned by the Washington Department of Transportation which could be combined with area on a lid to create a community focal point.
- Parks are an important part of the community and should include built facilities (i.e., playfields) as well as natural, un-landscaped areas. Connections to the existing Loop Trail as well as the Wetherill Nature Preserve are important.
- If a double-decked facility is built, it should be no higher than the current facility. The community does not want to see a facility similar to the Alaskan Way Viaduct.
- If a lid is placed over the freeway, it should not interfere with the movement of people.
- Some feel that a residential and/or commercial area (including low-income or affordable housing) might be an appropriate use if new space is created on top of a lid. Being able to walk to facilities improves the quality of life in the communities. Others feel that either the space created over a lid would be too expensive for low-income or affordable housing or that it would not be a land use compatible with existing uses.
- Leasing the property created on top of the facility could offset the cost of building a lid. If development is allowed, it should be consistent with the existing land use in the adjacent communities. It would be important to have local control over the property on the lid.
- A lidded facility that stretches for several miles may raise safety concerns. The monotony of driving through a tunnel could be broken by placing art on the walls or windows to the adjacent community.
- If transit stations are located in the Points communities, some saw the need for providing Park and Ride facilities to provide access to regional users. Others felt that drawing regional users into the community would detrimentally impact the neighborhood and transit access should emphasize local users.

Community Impacts

- When SR 520 was built, it did bisect existing communities and a grid system. For example, the City of Medina is now divided into a north and south community and are essentially two different communities (separate community meetings, etc.). A lid with a natural covering could reconnect these two areas. Yarrow Point, Hunts Point, and Clyde Hill are also split



into two communities by the SR 520 freeway and should be reconnected. The focus should be on pedestrian rather than solely vehicular access across the freeway.

- Today's impacts of the freeway, such as pollution – air, water, noise – should be mitigated from the shoreline to I-405. Today's pollution is having a detrimental impact on the quality of life in the communities as well as property values. Doing no further harm is a minimum expectation of the community. If capacity is added, pollution cannot increase.
- Noise is a major concern for the residents in the Points communities as well as in Bellevue and Kirkland. A Clyde Hill survey of residents found that 58% of the community could hear noise from the freeway, with 34% saying it was less than tolerable. Noise travels up the hills in the communities to impact residents above the freeway as well as across the water from the bridge. There is also concern about the noise from the SR 520 and I-405 interchange, which some perceive as worse than noise from SR 520.
- Water pollution is a significant concern to the community, which is assisting in restoration projects for salmon-bearing stream.
- SR 520 is perceived as the 'gateway to the eastside' and is not an attractive or inviting community feature. Some of the community feels that the communities along SR 520 are taking a disproportionate share of the impacts from the region's transportation system.
- There is concern about the impacts of construction, if changes are made to the existing facility. If changes are made, the outcome should be worth the impacts of construction. WSDOT does not have a good record for completing projects on time, such as the recent addition of HOV lanes east of I-405. It may be better to have another entity overseeing construction. As short of a construction time as possible is preferable to the community with as much of the construction as possible occurring within the existing corridor.
- Cut-through traffic is a major concern to the Points communities and should be reduced or eliminated. There should be no increase in traffic after the project is completed. It should also be recognized that simply metering ramps means that the traffic goes somewhere else and has an impact on another neighborhood.
- What impact does noise pollution have on the Bellevue School District facility next to SR 520 (which is currently leased to Bellevue Christian Schools; Bellevue School District does not have plans to place a public school in that location)?

Transit

- Transit is an important mode of travel and an improved public transportation system is needed. Some community members mentioned a high capacity transit system similar to BART in San Francisco to be able to access Seattle, Redmond, and Kirkland.
- SR 520 should be the first in a system approach to transit for the region. It is important to have creativity and courage when designing a transit system. The region should acknowledge that it is not possible to keep moving more and more cars and thus build the SR 520 corridor to accommodate rapid transit.
- How much of an impact will transit have on the congestion problems of today? It is important to have the maximum impact on the problem.



- It is possible that transit can be quieter than the traffic of today. This may be a benefit to the community, as more people will be moved through the corridor more quietly. The project should look for quiet transit options. It is also possible to reduce the amount of cut-through traffic if transit is built in the corridor.
- If transit is part of the solution, then incentives should be provided (i.e., free buses) as well as making it easy to use.
- The transit stop at Evergreen Point Road (flyer stop) is used by the community and should be maintained as a transit access point. It is important to maintain today's access to transit.
- If high capacity transit, goes through the Points communities, there should not be Park and Ride lots or other facilities that will attract users to the area or increase the amount of noise in the communities. Stations should be placed at locations where people can walk to or where there are Park and Ride lots.
- It is not acceptable to be evaluating a mid-lake crossing for high capacity transit. This option was suggested too late in the process.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

- Being able to walk and ride bicycles in the communities west of I-405 is important. There is a loop trail in the Points communities today that is used frequently by the community and should be enhanced if possible (i.e., connecting trail between 95th and 92nd, creating a walk-way down 92nd to 84th).
- Enhancing the ability of south Kirkland residents to safely walk or ride their bicycles under the freeway on 108th or Lake Washington Boulevard is important. This may mean adding dedicated lanes for bicycles
- A bicycle/pedestrian facility should be added across the lake on SR 520.

Transportation Demand Management

- Some members of the community feel that congestion pricing should be part of the solution to encourage use of alternative modes of transportation. Others do not want to have to pay for using the freeway.

Proposed Alternatives

- Growth will be continuing in the Puget Sound region. It is currently estimated that a population the size of Portland will be moving into the area east of I-405. This growth should be accommodated in whatever alternatives are selected by the Trans-Lake Washington Project.
- There is concern that when transportation needs increase in the region, the impact is always felt in the SR 520 corridor. Why is a third crossing north of SR 520 not being considered? Could a third crossing include only transit? Is a new north-south freeway east of I-405 being considered? Even if improvements are made to SR 520, a new lake crossing will be needed in the future due to a growing population. Any placement of a third crossing should be subject to the same scrutiny as the Trans-Lake Washington Project.



- The population needs to have choices for how to move around the region and alternatives in the future will need to provide for an increased population. Alternatives should improve transportation for the greatest number of users, be they cars, buses, etc., and provide the mitigation necessary to the adjacent communities. High capacity transit is not the only solution; any future improvements should include general purpose capacity.
- What is the problem that is trying to be addressed by the Trans-Lake Washington Project? If the problem is not going to be really solved, then why should anything be done? It seems that the project is focused on crisis management, not really solving the problem.
- The balance that should be achieved by the project is minimum impact with maximum usage of the corridor. The solutions should achieve a win-win for the local community, regional traffic, and environmental impacts.
- For this project to be successful, it will have to be completed on time and within budget.
- If the number of lanes is increased, they should stay within the existing right of way. This could be accomplished by double-decking the facility with a lid over the top.
- The first choice for the corridor would be to not widen the footprint. However, if the footprint has to be widened, it should be done to accomplish high capacity transit, not general purpose capacity.
- HOV lanes should be the only capacity improvements made and should only be added if the footprint is kept minimal, and parks and natural landscaping are placed over a lid. If this cannot be accomplished, then the no-action alternative should be selected.
- The interchange at SR 520 and I-405 does not currently function well and should be improved.
- The solution to congestion would be to add an additional lane to the four lanes in each direction on SR 520. Two of the lanes would be subject to a toll and the third lane reserved for transit and/or HOV.
- A lane needs to be added each way to relieve congestion.
- Accelerating the schedule raises a concern as to whether the required studies will be completed on time and credibly. Will all the information needed to make informed decisions be completed on time?
- Even with extensive public involvement and some of the public's interest in accomplishing this project cooperatively, some members of the public will not be satisfied with the outcome. The project needs to be prepared for this outcome.

Questions

- Will the Trans-Lake Washington Project be looking at impacts and potential improvements to the feeder streets leading to SR 520? If improvements are needed to these streets, then who will be responsible for funding them?
- What impact will the different alternatives have on the width of the footprint?



- How will the physical and community constraints at the I-5 and SR 520 interchange limit the range of possible alternatives in the rest of the corridor?
- Is a tunnel directly from downtown Seattle to SR 520, under I-5 and connecting at Montlake, still being considered?
- Is the Trans-Lake Washington Project being coordinated with the I-405 Corridor Program?
- Is implementation of solutions for the Trans-Lake Washington Project tied to the recent recommendations of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Transportation Commission?
- Why has the project determined that a north crossing from Sand Point to Kirkland is not feasible, but is studying an option placing high capacity transit in a new corridor between SR 520 and I-90?
- What volume of traffic will be accommodated by the potential solutions? How long will the solutions last? Will the potential solutions meet projections for growth in the region?
- What is the purpose of the project? Is it moving as many people as possible or trying to accommodate the communities?

Action Items

- Distribute information regarding the I-405 Corridor Program to the workshop participants.
- Obtain copy of comprehensive plan for north Bellevue.
- Obtain copy of noise study prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff as part of the Washington Transportation Partners proposal.

6.2 WEST OF I-405 COMMUNITIES OPEN HOUSE – NOVEMBER 29, 2000

Community Enhancements

- In order to protect the communities along SR 520, the freeway should be placed under a lid or in a tunnel from Lake Washington to I-405. A tunnel across Lake Washington was also suggested as mitigation for noise traveling from the bridge across the Lake to homes along the shores. While lids are preferable, there should be a cost-benefit consideration of them.
- If a lid is built, it should allow for future flexibility so that uses on top of the lids can be modified or expanded. Some felt that housing or high rises might not be appropriate land uses.
- Some participants were skeptical as to whether housing over Park and Ride lots would be an acceptable community enhancement. There are apartments being built over a Park and Ride lot in the Overlake area and some fear that the housing is targeted at too low of an income level.
- A successful project will result in noise and congestion levels lower than today. This may require a futuristic, above/off the ground system of roads.



- A suggestion was made to look at the Mercer Island facility as an example for exits, parks, etc.

Community Impacts

- If new development is placed on top of lids, noise will travel farther and higher and disturb more people.
- There is an enormous amount of cut-through traffic at NE 24th and 84th. The community should not be impacted by these regional trips. While mobility is part of the community's quality of life, cut-through traffic reduces the mobility of residents.
- The impacts of construction will be huge for the community; it may be necessary to pay contractors additional money to build the project more quickly.

Transit

- Having transit in the SR 520 corridor is essential – there is a need for a rapid way to move people through the corridor. This may mean providing HOV lanes to buses so they are not stuck in traffic. A first-class, free bus system is needed.
- Today, it is easy to use public transit to go into or out of Seattle at peak times, but not during the rest of the day. This needs to be addressed.
- Placing high capacity transit across the bridge may pose a problem for the trains if the bridge is being opened for navigational purposes.
- In Marseilles, France, trains have rubber tires on them so their routes can be re-directed if a road becomes blocked. This provides greater flexibility and reliability for the route.
- A good transit system includes a ferry system from Kirkland to Seattle.
- Adding lanes to SR 520 is not going to solve the problem. The right solution is creating a fast, safe, and efficient public transportation system that people will want to use.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

- There should be a bicycle/pedestrian lane across Lake Washington.

Transportation Demand Management

- There is a need to know who is using the system and what they are using it for, and then charge them accordingly. For example, there should be fees imposed on drivers whose destinations are Seattle or sports stadiums or 'high impact' vehicles. Others felt that people should not be charged for using a freeway based on the type of use; do not penalize people for going to the opera, etc.
- If people are interested in using a nice road, then they should pay for it.
- The project should address why people drive and commute by providing greater density, affordable housing, etc. If it were possible, would more people actually live and work in the same area?



Proposed Alternatives

- This project should be accelerated so a solution is implemented soon. The project should also consider 2040 as the ultimate demand that should be met. There is concern about the projected length of time to complete any solution. If no improvements are made with a solution, then it will be difficult to convince the public to pay for it.
- The project should balance regional needs with local community needs. It is important to recognize that the local community uses the facility. If all demand is met, there will need to be mitigation for the impact on neighborhoods. However, the demand of the region needs to be met.
- The solution to this project should be one that compels the state to expand the existing urban growth boundaries. The region is growing and population is moving farther east. This may mean extending SR 520 to Monroe. There should also be a new north-south corridor east of I-405 to serve the growing population.
- A successful project will result in less congestion than today. It should be recognized that demand will continue to be mostly in general purpose lanes; the project should address this demand and not try to shift trips into other modes.
- The region should recognize that I-5 and I-405 will need to be widened to accommodate demand.
- There should be a third crossing built to connect Redmond and Seattle (from Sand Point). This would add capacity to the system. The fact that there does not seem to be support for this solution is because there is a Seattle group against it. An origin and destination survey completed by the Trans-Lake Washington Project shows the need for a northern crossing.
- It seems that tunneling is a viable option that should be considered. There are some drawbacks, however, such as the need for ventilation. A suggestion was made to bury SR 520 from I-405 to the shoreline and then build a floating submerged tunnel to mitigate impacts and make the community a better place to live. However, if SR 520 is buried, then will the region also want to bury I-5 and I-405?
- The streets in east Bellevue are already congested and it appear that this may be due in large part to the fact that SR 520 does not have enough lanes.
- No new lanes should be added to SR 520 and the existing lanes should be turned into HOV only.
- There should be flexibility in the solutions implemented. If a lid is built across the freeway, then it should be built so additional lanes can be added in the future.
- It appears that SR 522 has actually narrowed capacity and speed for getting across and around the lake. We cannot keep narrowing some corridors and increasing others.
- The ultimate solution should ‘get people off the ground and where they want to go.’



Questions

- How does the project plan so that capacity does not exceed the facility soon after it is built? Is there a way to develop an alternative to meet all demand?
- What would be the advantages of a tunnel over a floating bridge?
- Is the project considering a toll system on SR 520?
- What technologies are included in high capacity transit? Will an east-west route connect to the planned north-south route on the west side of the lake?

7. SUMMARY OF EAST OF I-405 TO SR 520 TERMINUS COMMUNITY VALUES

The community east of I-405 to the terminus of SR 520 in Redmond is generally described as the residences and business districts in the cities of Kirkland, Bellevue, and Redmond.

7.1 EAST OF I-405 WORKSHOP – NOVEMBER 30, 2000

Community Enhancements

- A successful solution will result in less noise, increased mobility, a bicycle/pedestrian route, less concrete, and more pleasant visual sights. The aesthetics of the neighborhood should be maintained; any solution should visually fit into the neighborhoods.
- A successful project would result in the communities staying the same as they are today without an increase in traffic on local roads.
- There should be connections across SR 520 at Bear Creek.
- There is a need for direct access to Redmond Town Center.
- Where there are interchanges coming into neighborhoods, these streets should be made into neighborhood streets that would result in quieter neighborhoods. 84th in Medina was cited as a good example of the “quiet street” concept. Each exiting bridge should be a candidate for adding trees, etc.
- Building the freeway under a lid similar to Mercer Island is seen as an effective mitigation approach. The lid makes it feel like users are part of the community.
- The 51st Street interchange has caused a scar in the neighborhood. It is currently 5 lanes wide with off and on ramps. It should be made into a more friendly interchange, with rows of trees down that middle that would help knit the community together. It is important for drivers getting off of SR 520 to realize that they are in a neighborhood. This may be an appropriate place for a lid.
- A lid between 92nd and the Lake might make the most sense. A lid in the Points communities would create a more community and park-like areas and reduce the noise in the neighborhoods. There are not many areas east of I-405 that would make sense for a lid.



- If lids are built, there should not be housing on them, but rather parks, transit facilities, and bicycle and walking trails (facilities usable by the entire community). These types of facilities may justify the cost. A lid could become a community asset. Also, development rights on top of a lid could be sold to pay back the cost of a lid. The long-term needs of the transportation facility should also be considered if a lid is built.
- The following locations were suggested as potential locations for lids: View Point Park to enhance the connection to the park from the south side of SR 520; 40th Street interchange to include an expanded Park and Ride facility on top of it; 65th Street to enhance community connectivity and access to Ben Rush Elementary School; and 148th for increased north-south access across SR 520.
- The aesthetic feel of freeway crossings and bridges is important. The new bridge in Duvall and bridge in Redmond on Leary Road were cited as good examples of attractive structures.
- Increasing the density along the freeway by bringing more homes and businesses to the area will not necessarily solve the problem and may harm the quality of life.
- There is a need for increased access to SR 520. Today, too many cars are being funneled through too few locations, so congestion is terrible at a few spots rather than being spread out along the corridor. Suggestions for access included 124th, 130th, 140th, a frontage road from 148th to 124th and/or to 51st, and additional arterials. It may be that only half interchanges would be appropriate at these locations. If additional access is built, there needs to be consideration of the impacts on neighborhoods.

Community Impacts

- There is a need to address cut-through traffic from East Lake Sammamish Parkway through Marymoor Park to West Lake Sammamish Parkway.
- A resident described the fact that they cannot go one mile along 84th in Medina at rush hour in less than half an hour. Cut-through traffic occurs at other places along the corridor, including 51st, Bridle Trails neighborhood, and Points Drive. There is a need to relieve congestion on the arterials as well as the freeway. Increased capacity may increase the congestion on on- and off-ramps and increase the impact (cut-through traffic and noise) on residents.
- Noise is a problem for all the communities along the corridor and impacts residents and lowers property values. The favorite time of year for some is when SR 520 is closed for maintenance while others keep their windows closed all of the time. Suggestions for decreasing the amount of noise includes slowing the speed in the corridor and building physical barriers such as lids or bridges.
- The change in the number of lanes on SR 520 at various points in the corridor causes congestion.

Transit

- It is critical that the state and cities introduce inter-modal choices. Mobility options should be the solution. This includes providing people the ability to get from their home to a location where they can access transit.



- Today, transit is convenient to use if going to downtown Seattle or to major events. To increase use, buses should be more convenient to other locations (i.e., Bellevue to Redmond), free bus rides should be provided, frequencies during the day should be increased, and accessible stations placed where users can walk to them.
- Additional Park and Ride lots are needed to increase usage of transit. For example, a Park and Ride lot on top of a lid at 51st Avenue could increase transit access for the major employers in the area, such as Microsoft and Nintendo. To also increase use of transit and make the experience more convenient for the user, suggestions were made to provide amenities at Park and Ride lots, such as coffee shops, restrooms, grocery shops, dry cleaners, etc.
- One suggestion for the 'ultimate' transit experience would be to be able to use transit (bus or shuttle) to reach a form of rapid transit in the corridor in Redmond to get to Seattle. This would enable someone to live in Redmond and not have a car. This same example applies to a resident in Clyde Hill who would like to use the Evergreen Point Road flyer stop, but has no bus routes to get from their home to the bus stop.
- Existing Park and Ride lots need additional parking as they are already at capacity (i.e., south Kirkland Park and Ride lot).
- More accessibility to buses is needed. For example, if a rider misses a bus at the South Kirkland Park and Ride lot, a rider should be able to walk down to a flyer bus stop on SR 520 and catch the next bus.
- There are community centers and major employment hubs that would benefit from dedicated transit to and from them, such as Microsoft and the Redmond Town Center. It is also important to have Park and Ride lots at these types of facilities.
- Transit stops on the freeways can be very unpleasant, such as the Montlake Station. Today, many riders wait at Montlake Boulevard for buses to arrive and then walk down to the freeway-level stop. Flyer stops are seen as a good feature to include in other parts of the corridor. Transit stops in general could be made friendlier, such as adding walkways, trees, shrubs, and protected areas.
- To increase ridership, dial-a-ride service should be given consideration.
- Before investing further in transit, it is important to look at the cost/benefit of using transit versus cars. Positive benefits to consider include less pollution and impact on the environment, more cost effective, and easier to use than cars. Others question the cost/benefit of transit versus HOV lanes versus private cars. How many people will actually use transit?
- A transit system similar to monorail, BART, etc. is critical, but there should be incentives for using it. Suggestions were made for high capacity transit between Redmond and downtown Bellevue and from the shoreline of Lake Washington to Bellevue Square.
- One form of transit that should not be considered is a water taxi. A water taxi, as proposed in Kirkland, would have a detrimental impact on the neighborhoods, would increase traffic, and would increase pollution.



Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

- A trail along the existing Burlington Northern/Santa Fe right-of-way could be beneficial to the community (existing trail development under way).
- There should be a non-motorized route across the lake, even with the minimum footprint alternative. Increased access for non-motorized facilities is important.
- It is important to knit the communities on either side of SR 520 together through building pedestrian walkways. The entire area should be made more pedestrian friendly.
- A bicycle/pedestrian trail could be built along SR 202 into Redmond with crossing of SR 520, SR 202, and Bear Creek.

Transportation Demand Management

- There should be more incentives (Park and Ride lots, cellular phones on buses, dedicated buses to locations, education on how to read bus schedules, flyer stops) and disincentives (tolls) for encouraging people to not drive their cars. This also includes employers encouraging and providing incentives to their employees to use transit.
- There needs to be an attitude change if people are going to stop using their cars.

Proposed Alternatives

- Several suggestions were made to use new technologies to improve traffic management. Examples given were using sensors to provide control of traffic flow, using GPS to identify bus routes and the number of passengers on them, and building a warning system to alert drivers of traffic congestion so alternate routes can be used.
- The solutions need to redistribute the traffic problems. Capacity cannot be added and still expect to result in a reduction of traffic on local streets.
- Some feel that the solutions need to avoid a 'ribbon of concrete.' Others feel that with the growth in the region, it will be difficult to avoid more concrete to move people around the area.
- SR 520 should be reviewed as a regional, multi-modal corridor. Solutions need to provide multi-modal alternatives for driving single occupant vehicles as well as alternative routes for moving around. The entire corridor should be a place where people want to go. This includes coordinating with other regional transportation planning projects.
- The solutions should improve mobility without harming the neighborhoods and leaving life the same or better when they are implemented.
- Alternatives should be implemented considering a 50-year planning window and include provisions for population growth and land use 50 years into the future. Alternatives should also be designed to address peak commute needs.
- The proposed alternatives need to present a compromise on regional traffic needs versus local circulation issues.
- The solution should result in the same number of lanes on SR 520 as there are today.



- Restrict access of trucks on SR 520 to improve mobility.
- Design SR 520 to a 45 miles-per-hour facility, similar to Highway 99. This would create an environment where people will travel more slowly and allow tighter ramps that have less of an impact on the communities.
- Look to Mercer Island as an example of a project that creates opportunities for all types of mobility. This should be duplicated in the Trans-Lake Washington Project.
- The Trans-Lake Washington Project should look for ways to create a regional transportation system. This can be accomplished by working with the City of Bellevue to connect 148th to NE 24th.
- There are not enough arterials on the eastside to allow people multiple options for access to homes and businesses.
- HOV is a successful alternative as it increases the ability to move around the region more quickly.

Environmental Protection

- There needs to be consideration of the environment with whatever solutions are implemented – avoid a sea of concrete. It is important to keep natural areas and open spaces for animals in Bellevue; do not urbanize the entire area.
- Remember that Bear Creek is a major Chinook salmon stream and should be protected. This may include a sound barrier.

Questions

- What percentage of trips is on buses?
- What are the opportunities for using technology (i.e., GPS) to improve traffic?
- Are lids financially feasible?
- How is the Trans-Lake Washington Project coordinating with the I-405 Corridor Program, such as connections, noise, impacts, mitigation, etc?
- How is the Trans-Lake Washington Project coordinating with existing comprehensive and neighborhood plans?
- Are the existing HOV lanes on SR 520 working?
- Is the pathway along SR 520 a funded project after I-695 was passed?
- Will the impact on local streets be considered?
- How far beyond the end of SR 520 will improvements go (i.e., SR 202, Avondale Road)?
- Do cost/benefit analyses of proposed alternatives include time?

Action Items

- Obtain copy of previous work completed by City of Bellevue on potential access points on SR 520 east of I-405 and west of 148th Avenue.



7.2 EAST OF I-405 COMMUNITIES OPEN HOUSE – NOVEMBER 30, 2000

Community Enhancements

- A successful project would result in a high quality product, one that has a long life span, preserves quality of the area, accommodates the most people, and includes mitigation that protects today's neighborhoods.
- Do not sacrifice throughput for community character. The project should allow for character and community feeling while maintaining design standards.
- Noise continues to be a concern to residents. If noise walls are used, then they should be made more interesting. Increasing building size along the corridor may also protect the residences from noise as will increasing the mode split. Could plants also be used to mitigate air pollution as well as noise pollution? Could zoning incorporate mitigation?
- There is a freeway in Dallas with a depressed road that decreases noise impacts on the surrounding communities.
- The impressions in concrete on I-90 make the tunnel more aesthetically pleasing.
- WSDOT currently has a model for building a freeway, which should be used for this project. If the community is interested in additional enhancements, they should pay for them rather than taking funds that could be used in other communities.

Community Impacts

- How does the community feel about the trade-off between adding mobility versus protecting neighborhoods?
- Noise from the freeway is a major concern to neighborhoods; thus, no new roads should be built. Any additional lanes should be for high capacity transit.

Transit

- High capacity transit will have less of an impact than building additional roads.
- Transit at regular intervals all day would be a better use of space than HOV lanes as not many people go to work at the same time and can carpool together.
- Car sharing could be used in partnership with a high capacity transit system so that when people need a car, one is available.
- Today, buses are not accessible later in the evening and so are not convenient for people to use.

Transportation Demand Management

- There need to be more ways to encourage people not to use their cars.

Proposed Alternatives

- The transportation system needs to allow people to move around as well as live their lives.



- Any solution should accommodate future projections of growth. The solution should not be at capacity within five years. The project needs to look further out, such as 20 years, to what the needs will be so that the solution is long-term.
- Opportunities for partnering with private industry should be explored to affect land use.
- The region's area is limited in where future transportation systems can be built.
- There should be more ways to cross the freeway, even if they are non-motorized ways.
- Zoning and land use may need to be changed along the corridor to affect what development can occur and what will be the impact on neighborhoods. Zoning could also be used as a measure for future growth to moderate how much growth can occur.
- The solution should try to solve individual needs, not corporate needs.
- Accessibility to the freeway is important and suggestions were made for additional interchanges east of I-405, for example somewhere between 148th and I-405. Today, people are using NE 24th/Northup Way to access SR 520 further west.
- The 40th Street interchange has increased access to SR 520, but congestion in the neighborhoods near the 51st Street ramp has made access from home to the freeway more difficult.

Questions

- Does the purpose statement include quantitative goals?
- How much has the traffic on SR 520 increased since the tolls have been removed?
- How much can the existing bridge be expanded? What type of structure would a new bridge be?
- How close can interchanges be together on freeways?
- Have local tax improvement districts been looked at to pay for improvements on SR 520?
- Why are new buildings continued to be permitted in the 148th and 156th areas, but there is no infrastructure to handle the increase in traffic?
- Will 1% of the total cost of the project go toward public art?

8. WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

8.1 INVITED WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Montlake Community

Name	Organization
Jim Herkelrath	National Marine Fisheries Service
Ron Stenkamp	Montlake Community Council
Pete Marshall	Seattle Parks and Recreation Department



Name	Organization
Theresa Doherty	University of Washington
Scott Rutherford	University of Washington
Susie Plummer	University Village
Jim Kearnes	Montlake Community Council
Eddie Spear	Montlake Community Council
Sue Partridge	Seattle Public Library
Doris Burns	Montlake Community Council
Jonathan Dubman	Montlake Community Council
Bill Talley	University of Washington, Capitol Project
Carolyn Corson	Laurelhurst Community Council
John Maloof	Laurelhurst Community Council
Susan Sanchez	City of Seattle
Russ Amick	

Portage Bay/Roanoke/Eastlake/North Capitol Hill

Name	Organization
Allan Jones	North Capitol Hill Neighborhood Association
Shelly DaRonche	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Pageen Shean	North Capitol Hill resident
Dave Thorne	North Capitol Hill resident
Wes Larson	Eastlake/Portage Bay Business Association
Ted Lane	NOISE/Portage Bay Roanoke Community Club
Joyce Boyd	
Kirk McKinley	FABNIA
Fran Conley	Roanoke resident
Cheryl Thomas	Harvard/Roanoke Beautification Project
Richard H. Brainard	North Capitol Hill resident
Betty Swift	Portage Bay/Roanoke Community Council
Chris Leman	Eastlake Community Council

West of I-405 to Lake Washington

Name	Organization
Laurel Preston	City of Medina resident
Tom Kidd	St. Luke's Lutheran Church
Bob Trimble	Yarrow Point resident
Hugh Givens	City of Kirkland resident
Dale Madden	Hunts Point resident
Gwen Warren	Spring Hills resident
Ron Norion	
Ryan Montgomery	Yarrow Point resident
Norm Storme	City of Kirkland resident
Mitch Wasserman	City of Clyde Hill
Phil Rourke	City of Clyde Hill



Name	Organization
Randy Heath	Yarrow Point resident
Karen Loeser	Yarrow Point resident
Laurie Finnely	Hunts Point resident
Bob Tate	Clyde Hill resident
Todd Nunn	City of Medina resident
Jay Blasingame	Hunts Point resident
Trish Berry Bell	City of Medina resident
D.E. Martin	City of Medina resident
Cheryl Cooney	Hunts Point resident
Jim Barbee	City of Medina resident

East of I-405 to SR 520 Terminus

Name	Organization
Donald Van Dyne	Overlake Office Furniture
Norah Gaynor	King County Parks System
Peter Pitarys	Neighborhood Network North/ Vuecrest Neighborhood
Robert Nunnenkamp	King County Parks
Steve Sindiory	City of Bellevue
Norm Hansen	Bridle Trails Community Club
Dan Turner	Houghton Community Council, City of Kirkland
Lucy Stimmel	Resident
Laurie Ashbaugh	Realtor, Clyde Hill
Laurie Johanson	Rush Ellen PTA Rose Hill Jr. Pts A
Paul Sarn	
Robert Calvert	Chase Community Club, Bellevue
Jane Archer	Pro Sports Club
Nancy Penrose	Redmond Resident
Karl Kostal	King County Parks/ Marymoor Park
Judy Smith	Redmond Town Center
Gary Smith	Redmond Trails Community
Michael Hobbs	Friends of Marymoor Park
Dennis Neuzil	Bicycle/Pedestrian interests

8.2 TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Organization	Address/Phone	E-mail
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Name	Organization	Address/Phone	E-mail
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Pat Serie, Facilitator	EnviroIssues	101 Stewart Street, Suite 1101, Seattle, WA 98101 (206) 269-5041	pserie@enviroissues.com
Amy Grotefendt, Public Involvement Manager	EnviroIssues	101 Stewart Street, Suite 1101, Seattle, WA 98101 (206) 269-5041	agrotefendt@enviroissues.com
Jenni Cannon, Public Involvement Support	EnviroIssues	101 Stewart Street, Suite 1101, Seattle, WA 98101 (206) 269-5041	jcannon@enviroissues.com



9. WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING WORKSHOPS AND OPEN HOUSES



11/15/00

Trans-Lake Project Comments

It is obvious that a “no action” decision results in the least environmental impact on the neighborhoods. What is the major disadvantage to “no action” (which does not preclude an aggressive maintenance program)? Traffic gridlock. However, a new larger capacity bridge will have the same problem in 10-15 years. We are then back to where we were, having spent large sums of money, having damaged the environment and the quality of life and reduced the property values in the neighborhoods. People will move out of those neighborhoods adding to their commute and creating new traffic jams. This scenario duplicates that of the northeastern U.S. and we should learn from those mistakes.

There are positive aspects to “no action”. Environment, quality of life and cost are some—the most important factors in any equation. If gridlock is inevitable, no matter how many bridges we build, the best and the only solution might be HOV and a better public transportation system. A free one coupled with extensive park and ride lots might be the ideal and cheapest answer.

The Devil Is In The Details

In looking over the various alternatives, more details are needed to evaluate them. Some questions are:

- *Whose backyard will the construction go through?
- *Whose street will the construction equipment rumble by on?
- *How about noise? How long? How loud?
- *How about dust?
- *What is the time line between this project and Sound Transit ?
The latter construction takes place in the nearby U. District.
- *With more traffic coming across a bigger bridge, where does it all go?
The freeway is already full. What is that fix?
- *What property will you take or condemn?
- *What legal power will the neighborhoods have to enforce agreements?

It would be nice if there were a map to see what is going where and a schedule of events. The devil is truly in the details and an evaluation is impossible without those details. It follows that a decision also impossible. Perhaps “no action” has a place in the decision making as the details unfold.

John Maloof, Laurelhurst

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3 PAGES Nov 16, 2002 - put back to her - the 1st record!
SUBMITTED BY Barbara Zepoon #708
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Paul Nov 1, 2002

**Critique of Metropolitan Transportation Plan Alternatives Analysis and
Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

by Margaret Cary Tunks., 4201 Via Marina, Marina Del Rey, CA 90292

telephone 310 577 9331; "e" mail: mctunks@aol.com

(the second edition of my book, *Citizens Against Freeways, Fighting Fiercely and
Winning Sometimes with Part 4*, is available by mail, costs \$2.00)..

In 1976 I submitted to the U.S.Department of Transportation a 276 page, (plus
added items) , **Critique of the Draft National Environmental Impact Statement,
NEPA, for Interstate-90.**

**The Puget Sound Regional Council has presented the Metropolitan Transportation
Plan, a draft environmental impact statement based on SEPA, the State
Environmental Protection Act, but this is incorrect; the document should be based
also on NEPA, the National Environmental Protection Act and the pertaining U.S.
Administrative Regulations. NEPA is required when U.S., (federal), funds are used
for capital projects; PSRC has already passed federal funds to the Washington State
Department of Transportation for such projects as the Trans-Lake Washington Study
of capital projects like additions to the SR 520 corridor.**

My critique of the DEIS will be limited to part of the area of the four-county Puget
Sound Regional Council, (PSRC): Seattle; and the Eastside of Lake Washington,
defined as the area from the east side of Lake Washington north to Woodinville, east
to the Cascade foothills, and south to beyond Renton.

---1. **The DEIS is incomplete because it does not record the essential information
on ferry and rail alternatives,, especially for transit.**

**The DEIS is incomplete because it does not fully state the social, economic, and
environmental, SEE, effects of the essential alternatives.**

**The DEIS is incomplete because it based only on transportation by motor
vehicles on bridges, freeways, highways, and streets.**

---2. **The Metropolitan Transportation Plan DEIS is obsolete because the reported
transportation planning process is backward.**

>Transportation systems are being chosen to meet the traffic demands of fossil
fuel vehicle traffic.

>Transportation demands are based on the Eastside urban sprawl that creates
more future motor-vehicle-oriented needs.

> More motor vehicles on more streets, highways, and freeways, and bridges



create more urban sprawl.

> It is impossible to build sufficient motor vehicle lanes to serve more urban sprawl.

---3. The MTP DEIS shows few plans for the future:

> THE GLOBAL SUPPLY of PETROLEUM:

The DEIS records both the traffic lanes that will be added in the future and the costs for the building and use of the lanes,, but it does not show how long the fuel will be available. There is no data recorded that predicts how much global petroleum will be available, but there are two important facts: Use of petroleum will peak at 2005; All of the world's oil wells will have been found by the year 2010; .

>THE MTP DEIS DOES NOT RECORD THE ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES IN THE SEATTLE/EASTSIDE AREA: The MTP provides information about the motor vehicle capacity of freeways, highways, and arterials, and it predicts the amount of bus transit etc. in those alternatives-- but there is no information at all about:

FERRIES: costs and car/truck-people ferries and on passenger-only ferries..

RAIL: transit rail costs, speed of trains and distance apart; capacity of cars; rail stations on rail routes to implement land use plans.

The MTP DEIS does not record that the Washington State Department of Transportation has stopped any of the essential consideration of Trans-Lake Washington Seattle/Eastside transportation alternatives that are in the same transportation corridor across Lake Washington: SR 520 and I-90.

>>Alternative SR 520, the Evergreen Bridge Route:

The Washington State Department of Transportation, (DOT), highway budget bill passed in 1999, included \$800,000 more for , "a second Route 520 bridge", ... "to begin an environmental view and design work". The Trans-Lake Washington Study has used federal and state funds to "enhance traffic flows" across the Lake. They are working on four "formal environmental impact statements", "feasible solutions" for alternatives ranging from 2 to 6 additional traffic lanes on new bridges and widening highways on the SR 520 route. The DOT language is based on "enhancing traffic mobility", (meaning building more lanes), and "mitigation", which means trying to cover-up the damage caused and being continued. None of the four alternative projects can be accepted by Seattle; (the Seattle Council and Mayor passed a resolution permitting bus ramps only on SR 520). The DEIS does not record the SEE damaging effects to Seattle and Bellevue caused by additional traffic lanes on SR 520;



there is no record of how SR 520 alternatives will serve the demands of the people on the Eastside.

>>Alternative Interstate-90:

The DEIS must record the complete information about the essential transit alternative on I-90 that was not in the Trans-Lake Washington Study recommendations. Before the DEIS was published, the DOT told Seattle officials that it will reconfigure the two I-90 bridges so that there will be two additional traffic lanes into Seattle in the 4-1-1-4 configuration: 4-2 lanes on the new I-90 bridge and 4 lanes on the old I-90 bridge. Now the DOT is working with Sound Move on reconfiguring I-90.

The MTP DEIS has only two items in re rail transit on the Eastside : Map 10, page 73, and top of page xiv: The SEE effects rail transit would have on land use; and the SEE effects it would have on the people in Seattle and on the Eastside. An outline for this might be:

>>Town and cities will be built at railroad stations!

The towns and cities of our country were built as ports on the ocean, lakes, and rivers, and as stations built along railroads. The DEIS SEE facts must include:

- >>information about the two railroads: the north/south Burlington Northern Railroad along Lake Washington; east/west I-90 across Lake Washington.
- >> plans and SEE about railroad stations on the rail transit lines.
- >> SEE information about the costs, capacity for passengers, (size and speed of trains), etc.

~Rail can be built on the present I-90 from Seattle to Issaquah and beyond.

Aubrey Davis, (now on the Washington State Transportation Commission), was Mayor of Mercer Island and Chairman of the Metro Transit Committee when the U.S. Secretary of Transportation approved the present design of I-90 in 1971. In a sworn deposition for the 1979 final trial on I-90, Davis said that there is room for both Mercer Island's motor vehicle lane and rail on I-90 on the island.

~The Burlington Northern parallel rail can take the future I-405 traffic passenger load: parallel rail can take the future I-405 motor vehicle gridlock passenger load. DEIS SEE information must record the comparison of rail transit to motor vehicle costs, the use of petroleum compared to the use of electricity, the period of and the costs of the two alternatives -- trains on tracks and motor vehicles on streets, roads, highways, freeways, and bridges.

Margaret Trunk





Northwest Office:
6511 2nd Avenue NW, Suite 320, Seattle, WA 98117

November 29, 2000

Trans-Lake Washington Project
401 Second Avenue South, #300
Seattle, WA. 98104

Design Comments

Friends of the Earth, NW Office (FoE) thanks you for the opportunity to submit design comments. Founded in 1969, today Friends of the Earth has more than 20,000 members nationwide who support our mission to protect the planet from environmental degradation, preserving biological, cultural, and ethnic diversity, and empowering citizens to have an influential voice in decisions affecting the quality of their environment and their lives. FoE is on the Negotiating Team in the Tri-County ESA Response effort.

Congestion: Before making a decision to add lanes to SR 520, you must study and consider the effects of latent demand. When WashDOT opened the reversible lanes on I-90, those lanes filled much faster than planners expected. Furthermore, planners observed no reduction in traffic on I-405 or alternatives to I-90. Portland and San Francisco both have numerous, crowded bridges. The assumption that adding lanes will reduce congestion is just that, an assumption.

In addition to considering congestion, we must reduce the quantity of air pollution, including ozone, oxides of nitrogen and sulfur, and particulates generated. The only way to avert global warming is to reduce the quantity of carbon dioxide cars and other combustion sources emit to the atmosphere. Building additional highway lanes will thwart this goal. Other air pollutants harm human health, especially the elderly, very young, and those with respiratory ailments. Air in Mt. Rainier National Park, North Cascades National Park, and surrounding wilderness areas does not meet air quality standards, and automotive emissions is a significant cause. Consider way to reduce all air pollutants and achieve ambient air quality standards.

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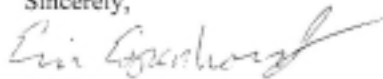


Ecosystem Impacts: On September 8, 2000 and October 24, 2000 the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) submitted comments to WashDOT regarding the I-405 expansion project. Many of the comments are applicable to the effects you must consider for the SR 520 project. NMFS raised concerns about the direct effects of the project as well as the indirect effects. Direct effects include stormwater management, which in a June 2000 memo WashDOT inappropriately dismissed as too difficult. Additional direct effects include degraded water quality, impaired channel conditions and dynamics, habitat access, peak and base flows, hydrology, and watershed conditions including impervious surface and tree cover. Indirect effects are largely the same, but result from the population and economic growth identified in the project need. If the jurisdictions where this growth will occur do not have plans to provide for conservation of chinook salmon, those jurisdictions will be liable for the harm that results.

Maintaining SR 520 as four lanes while improving transit and HOV access makes sense. Designating existing lanes across the bridge for transit and HOVs makes more sense. Building additional lanes will only worsen air pollution and sprawl.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me. Please keep this office informed as to developments in this matter.

Sincerely,



Eric Espenhorst
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